Results

Historical Landings

There are many possible explanations for fluctuations in commercial landings for North Carolina. Fluctuations can be due to ecological changes in the area being fished, social and economic changes in a particular fishery, and changes in management strategies. Ecological changes that can affect commercial landings include alterations in the ecological community structure, deterioration or enhancement of habitat and water quality, and weather events such as hurricanes. Social and economic changes that can effect commercial landings include changes in the ex-vessel value of a species, user group conflicts, the total amount of effort employed in any particular fishery and the expense of operating within a specific fishery. Lastly, management strategies can affect landings by creating regulations that control effort or harvest to maintain commercially viable stocks.

Statewide landings for North Carolina have varied widely from 1972 to 2002 (Figure 2). Total landings for the state increased greatly from 1973 to 1981. However, landings declined sharply from 1982 until 1987 where landings tended to remain fairly constant until 1997. Landings showed an overall declining trend from 1997 to 2001 and increased slightly in 2002. Landings reached a maximum of 432 million pounds in 1981 and a minimum of 130 million pounds in 1973.

The current ex-vessel value for the statewide landings of North Carolina exhibited an overall increase from 1972 to 2002 (Figure 3). The current value again increased sharply from 1975 to 1980 and then remained fairly constant until 1993. The current value increased from 1993 to 1995 and then remained constant until 2000. An overall declining trend in current value is exhibited from 2000 to 2002. The current value reached a maximum of $110 million in 1995 and a minimum of $12 million in 1972. The deflated value for the state's landings increased overall from 1972 to 2002 (Figure 3). The deflated value declined in 1981, remained constant until 1988, and decreased from 1989 until 1992. In 1993, the deflated value increased until 1995 then remained